

COME AND DRINK.

“Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”—REV. xxii. 17

ON the banks of the Wissahickon, and on the highway side, a few miles from the city of Philadelphia, there stands a beautiful little fountain, not “*sealed*,” but secured with hewn stone, which bears the inscription, “*Pro bono publico*,”—for the public good. Now, suppose the reader beheld a weary and thirsty traveler standing beside, or walking around that fountain, requesting the prayers of the passers-by that he might be enabled to obtain and drink its waters,—what would you think of him? Would you not conclude that the man was either beside himself, or had *no desire to drink the water* that was free to every body? Would you feel like praying for the man, or like instructing him? Did you believe him to be honest in his request, would you not feel like administering to him the tender rebuke of Paul to the Galatians?—“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you,” that you should not step forward and take the water that is free to all who desire to drink it? And is not the water of life in Christ freer to the poor weary and thirsty traveler of this world than any that ever gushed from earthly fountains?

And what does Christ require, more than that we should take this water and drink it?

Should you see a man at the fountain by the way-side, telling the thirsty stranger that certain qualifications, actions, forms, feelings, and dispositions were indispensably necessary to the reception of the free water, would you not charge him with cruelty, and call him a misrepresenter of the fountain, and an enemy of the poor traveler? But how much more cruel is the man who would pervert the truth as it is in Jesus, and misrepresent the saving fountain of the gospel, by

telling poor sinners that they must observe certain forms, do certain things, and have certain qualifications, dispositions, and feelings, before they can be saved! This is not what Christ says. Hear him. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." (John vii. 37.) And where is the man who does not thirst? Some thirst for riches, and some for honors; some for carnal pleasures, and some for superior attainments; some for happiness in this world, and some for happiness in the next; some for one thing, and some for another; but, whatever the thirst or desired gratification may be, this world can furnish no material of pure and permanent satisfaction for the thirsty soul of man. "*Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*" (John iv. 13, 14.)

This water that Christ gives is free salvation through his own merits; and all who thirst for this water have the special invitation of Jesus, "*Come and drink.*"

Reader, have you received this free salvation through the merits of Christ? If not, you are in unbelief and sin, and already under the sentence of condemnation and in a lost state. The Bible tells us that "*all have sinned,*" (Rom. v. 12,) and that "*God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,*" (John iii. 16,) and that "*there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.*" (Acts iv. 12.)

If you see these great truths, you see the Son of God as a sufficient Saviour proclaimed to you in the gospel. And if you see him and believe in him, then it is the will of the Father that you should have everlasting life. (John vi. 40.) If you do not see this to the

saving of your soul, the gospel is hidden to you, and you are lost. (2 Cor. iv. 3.) Fearful thought! And is this tract now in the hands of a soul in a lost state? Then your condition is more lamentable than that of Hagar in the wilderness, dying of thirst beside a well of water which she sees not. "*And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water,*" &c. (Gen. xxi. 19.) O sinner, may the Holy Spirit of God open your eyes to see the well of living water in Jesus Christ,—to see how *near* it is, and how *free* it is, while you are perishing for lack of it!—to see that salvation in Jesus is perfect, and that you, the sinful and helpless creature, have but to believe in him and be saved. (Acts xvi. 31.) *Only believe!* (Mark v. 36; Luke viii. 50.) This is all! Christ has paid the whole price for salvation, so that poor lost sinners can have it for nothing! Come, sinner, and take it, "*without money and without price,*" (Isa. lv. 1,) by simple faith only. As cold waters to your thirsty soul, so should such good news be from a far country, (Prov. xxv. 25,) a country that you can never reach except you receive the glad tidings, "Believe and live." This is the free and the "*great salvation.*" How shall you escape if you neglect it? (Heb. ii. 3.)

Do you say that you are a poor unhappy sinner, and striving to be saved? Then turn and look at that poor thirsty stranger, standing by the Wissahickon fountain, striving and praying that he only knew how to get and drink the water,—water that is running before his eyes, and free to every body! Wonder at him, but don't condemn him; for he is not more foolish and blinded than you are yourself. There is pardon and salvation before *your* eyes in the gospel; and there is Jesus, saying, Whosoever will, let him come and take it freely; only believe and be saved. You say you believe in Jesus. Ah! but you do not believe you are

saved. If you truly believed you were saved for Jesus' sake, you would never thirst again. (John iv. 14.) You would never be unhappy. You are like the man at the fountain, taking the water in his mouth, but he is afraid to swallow it. Balaam had the words of life in his mouth, and so had Satan, and King Agrippa was "almost persuaded to be a Christian;" but none of them had the word in their hearts. You must have the word of truth in your heart before you can be free indeed, — before you can be saved. You must believe in the Lord Jesus, and firmly believe that you are saved through the merits of his one offering, because he hath said, "*Verily, verily, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life.*" (John vi. 47.) This is believing on Christ's words and resting on Christ's work. This is going hungry and thirsty, with all your sins, to Jesus, and believing you are now and for ever saved through his blood, simply because you believe in him and because *he hath declared so*. This is taking the water and drinking the water, and knowing that you have drunk it. This you should know. If you do not know that you are saved, why expect a stranger to say you are? Oh, believe in Jesus! and believe you have salvation freely in his blood, and then you will have a life and salvation within you, with which your own conscience will be satisfied, and with which your whole life, before God and the world, will correspond.

Your good works must shine before men. But how can you have good works to shine without, until you have life and light within you? But light and life you can not have until you first receive Christ by faith. Darkness can never produce light. The rocky heart can never of itself produce the water of life. So come, sinner, *just as you are*, and take Jesus *just as he is offered to you*, — FREELY.

AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY,

28 CORNHILL, BOSTON.